

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of treating an auto-immune disease in an
5 animal comprising the step of orally administering a type one
interferon to said animal such that the type one interferon is
ingested after oral administration.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said interferon is
selected from alpha-interferon and beta-interferon.
- 15 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said interferon is
selected from the group consisting of human recombinant interferon,
rat interferon and murine interferon.
- 20 4. The method of claim 2, wherein said interferon is
administered in a dosage of from about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000
I.U./kg.
- 25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said interferon is
administered every other day.

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6. The method of claim 1, wherein said animal is a human.

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7 The method of claim 1, wherein said auto-immune disease is selected from the group consisting of multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes mellitus, psoriasis, organ-specific auto-immune diseases, chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyradiculoneuropathy and Guillain-Barré syndrome.

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8. A method of decreasing the incidence of insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus in at-risk populations, comprising the step of orally administering INF- α to individuals of said at-risk population.

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9. The method of claim 8, wherein said interferon is selected from the group consisting of human recombinant interferon, rat interferon and murine interferon.

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10. The method of claim 8, wherein said interferon is administered in a dosage of from about 5 I.U./kg to about 50,000 I.U./kg.

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11. The method of claim 8, wherein said interferon is administered every other day.

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12. A method of reducing blood glucose levels in an animal comprising the step of orally administering INF- α to said animal such that the INF- α is ingested after oral administration.

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13. The method of claim 12, wherein said interferon is selected from the group consisting of human recombinant interferon, rat interferon and murine interferon.

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14. The method of claim 12, wherein said interferon is administered in a dosage of from about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000 I.U./kg.

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15. The method of claim 12, wherein said animal is a human.

16. A method of decreasing the onset of insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus in at-risk populations, comprising the step of orally administering INF- α to individuals of said at-risk population.

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17. The method of claim 16, wherein said INF- α is selected from the group consisting of human recombinant interferon, rat interferon and murine interferon.

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18. The method of claim 16, wherein said interferon is administered in a dosage of from about 50 I.U./kg to about 25,000 I.U./kg.

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